

MEMORIAL

OF THE

BOARD OF TRADE OF PORTLAND, MAINE,

PRAYING

That the provisions of the treaty of 1854 between the United States and Great Britain, known as the reciprocity treaty, be extended so as to include the products of the workshop and the manufactory, and relieve the present trade of all onerous and unjust taxations.

FEBRUARY 14, 1859.—Referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations and ordered to be printed.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

The Board of Trade of the city of Portland respectfully represent that the commercial relations between the United States and the British North American Provinces have been, at all times, matters of the deepest concern to the people of this city, as they largely affect the business of this port, and of the whole State of Maine. Its territory is so interposed between the interior and maritime Provinces of Great Britain as to afford the most easy and direct communication between them across it; and prior to the treaty of Washington, in 1842, the need of retaining the valley of the St. John for the purpose of keeping up a communication led Great Britain to refuse all other terms of agreement for the adjustment of the boundary dispute. With the settlement of that protracted controversy came peace and quiet on the border, and the exchange of offices of kindness and courtesy in place of border warfare along our extended frontier. The free navigation of the St. John was the first practical step towards reciprocal trade, which resulted in the reciprocity treaty of 1854.

The great value of the reciprocity treaty is shown by the rapid increase of our colonial trade, and the large balance in favor of the United States. To appreciate fully its advantages it is only necessary to refer to the former relations of the two countries.

Maine was occupied simultaneously by French and English colonists before any other portion of the United States, and for more than one hundred and fifty years was in dispute between these rival claimants, till at the close of the French war, by the treaty of 1763, the

French power therein was extinguished, and from that time the maritime supremacy of England was established in every sea on the globe.

Not content to allow the original Provinces to flourish under this new order of things, Great Britain soon drove the thirteen colonies into war, and its conclusion, by the treaty of 1783, left to that nation nothing valuable in America but that which she had recently conquered from France.

The thirteen colonies had invited Canada to join in the revolution, but without success, and failed to conquer it by the merest accident or chance of war. The people of the United States, in common with those of the Provinces, saw the necessity of maintaining friendly relations with each other, and proposed, at the conclusion of the war, to allow the citizens of the Provinces to participate in trade on equal terms with those of the United States, but the British government refused. Two years later it was made the subject of distinct negotiation, by our minister to England, but again rejected. In 1789 it was, for a third time, proposed and refused. From that time to 1822 there was not a British colonial port into which an American vessel could enter.

By the relaxation of this law a trade gradually sprang up, and in 1827 \$445,000 of colonial products were imported into the United States, against \$2,704,014 of export thereto. Under the "*McLane arrangement*" of 1830 the trade increased, and immediately after the adjustment of our boundary disputes by the treaty of Washington, in 1842, efforts were made to extend the intercourse between the two countries by means of railways.

In 1844 the project of railway from Portland to Montreal was entered upon, and successfully accomplished in 1853, increasing very largely colonial trade.

Prior to this, or as early as 1834, the claim of the colonies of the right of self-government had been asserted, and this concession was finally made to them in the despatch of Earl Gray in the latter part of the year 1846, the same year in which the law was proposed to withdraw all protection to colonial produce on the part of the imperial government. Shut out of the markets of the United States by our tariff laws, and excluded from those of England by its geographical position, in the absence of means of communication with the Atlantic ocean, Canada sought reciprocal trade with the United States in the natural products of the two countries, while the United States claimed an enlargement of the rights of fishery. These efforts resulted in the reciprocity treaty of June 5, 1854, by which a right to the fisheries was granted, and a free interchange was allowed of the products of the sea, the forest, the mine, and the farm, between the United States and all British North America. The effect of this arrangement is shown in the increase of trade of the two countries.

We give below a table showing the imports and exports between the United States and the British North American colonies in 1827, in 1849, and since 1852.

Table showing the trade between the United States and British North America.

Year.	Imports.	Exports.	Total.	Excess of exp'ts.
1827-----	\$445,000	\$2,704,014	\$3,149,014	\$2,269,014
1849-----	2,826,880	5,932,106	6,758,986	3,105,226
1852-----	6,110,299	10,509,016	16,519,305	4,398,717
1853-----	7,550,604	13,140,642	20,691,246	5,590,038
1854-----	8,927,560	24,566,860	33,494,320	15,639,300
1855-----	15,136,734	27,806,020	42,942,754	12,669,286
1856-----	21,310,421	29,029,349	50,339,870	7,718,928
1857-----	22,124,296	24,262,482	46,386,778	2,138,186
1858-----	15,806,519	23,651,727	39,458,246	7,845,205

A trade so vastly beneficial to the United States should be free from all unnecessary restrictions, and we regret to observe a falling off in it since the movement of the Treasury Department to place it entirely on the basis of foreign trade. The recent appointment of consular agents, and the enforcement of fees on all parcels or shipments of merchandise, is alike onerous and annoying, producing no income to the national treasury, increasing only the private fortunes of government officials, and exciting ill-will along our entire frontier.

The undersigned therefore, believing that the peace, the welfare, and the mutual interests of both countries will be promoted by an enlargement of this trade with the British North American colonies, respectfully ask Congress to extend the provisions of the reciprocity treaty as far as practicable, so as to include the products of the workshop and the manufactory, and relieve the present trade of all onerous and unjust exactions.

J. B. BROWN,

President.

T. C. HERSEY,

A. K. SHURTLEFF,

Vice Presidents.

S. E. SPRING,

N. O. CRANE,

JOHN PURINTON,

HENRY FOX,

JED'H JEWETT,

Directors.

PORTLAND, *February* 10, 1859.

